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**Governor's Proposed Budget FY18-FY-19
Appropriations Hearing
Department of Housing
Friday, February 17, 2017**

Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Ziobron, and Members of the Committee, thank you for considering my written testimony on the important investments through the Department of Housing to support efforts to end homelessness in CT.

I am John Bradley, Executive Director of Liberty Community Services in New Haven. I am asking the Committee to continue the important investments that have been made in housing and homeless services support by the State of Connecticut.

Governor Malloy and legislative leaders have long understood the importance of ending homelessness in both human and fiscal terms. We are seeing declines in numbers of people who are homeless and we are one of three states to have ended homelessness for veterans. And as of December, 2016, CT has matched all chronically homeless individuals to housing. This was done through the State's commitment to ending homelessness.

The current budget preserves critical funding including:

- **The DOH Housing/Homeless Services line item, \$73.7 million in FY18 and 78.3 million in FY19**, for frontline housing/homeless services, outreach, emergency shelters, and the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), which are essential to aid those who have fallen into homelessness and move them quickly to permanent housing. The Rental Assistance program funds the rental subsidies which make Supportive Housing possible. Supportive Housing continues to be the most effective housing model to assist people experiencing chronic homelessness and is proven to cut public system costs by up to 70%.
- **The Homeless Youth line item:** Youth outreach services, crisis housing for youth, and housing services and supports are essential services to transition youth from crisis to stability.
- But the DOH Budget also included a **13% cut to AIDS Housing** in each of the two budget years. The loss of These funds will hurt agencies like Liberty which provide housing for people with HIV. Dozens of people with HIV will have their housing at risk if these funds are not restored.

I ask you to

- maintain support of the Housing/Homeless Services line and Homeless Youth line
- restore the cuts made to AIDS Housing

Thank you for considering these requests.

Sincerely,

John Bradley
Executive Director
Liberty Community Services

